THE FALL OF METROPOLIS!
SUPERMAN
IN ACTION COMICS
701
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1994
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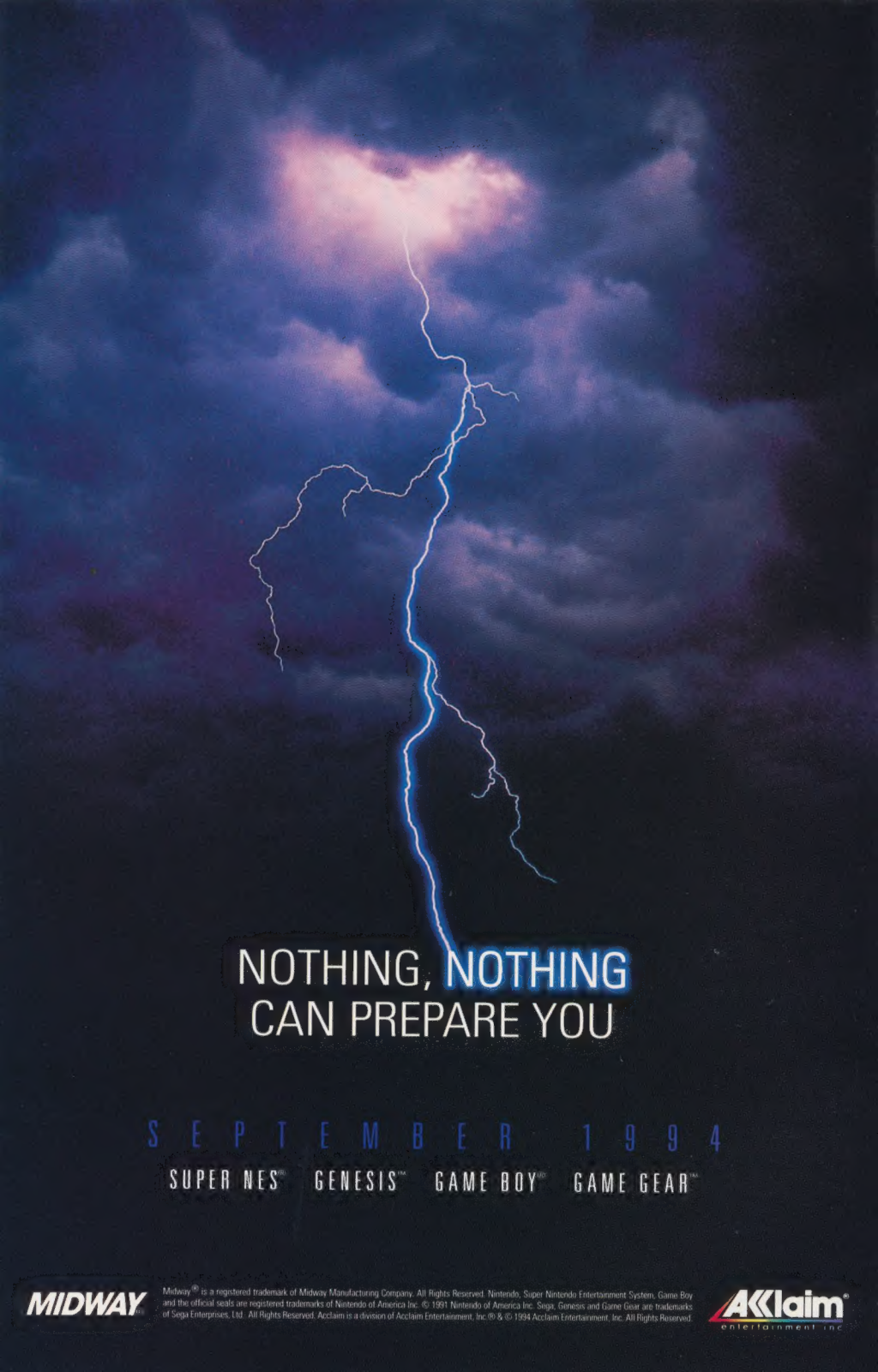
NOTHING, NOTHING
CAN PREPARE YOU
SEPTEMBER 1994
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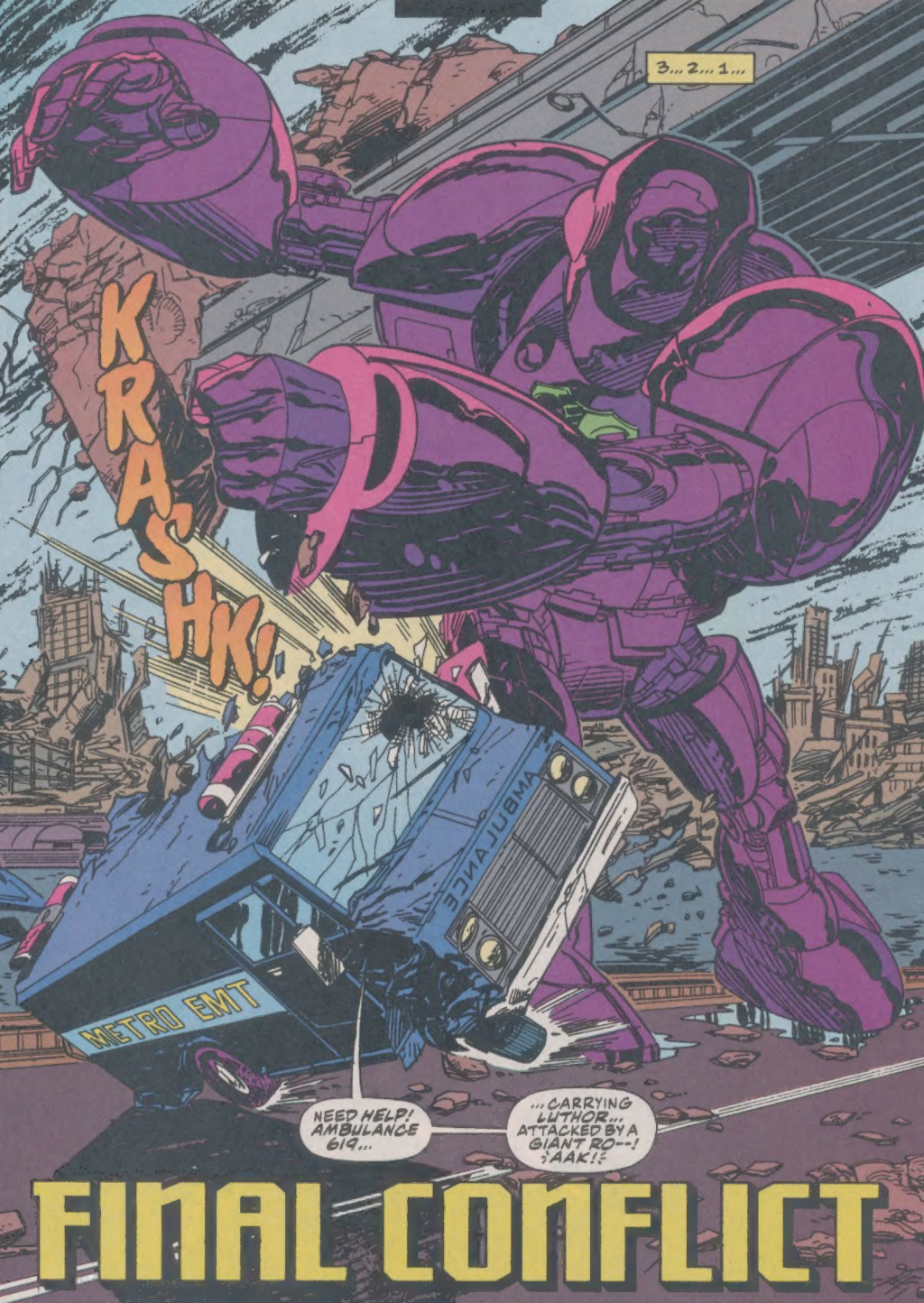

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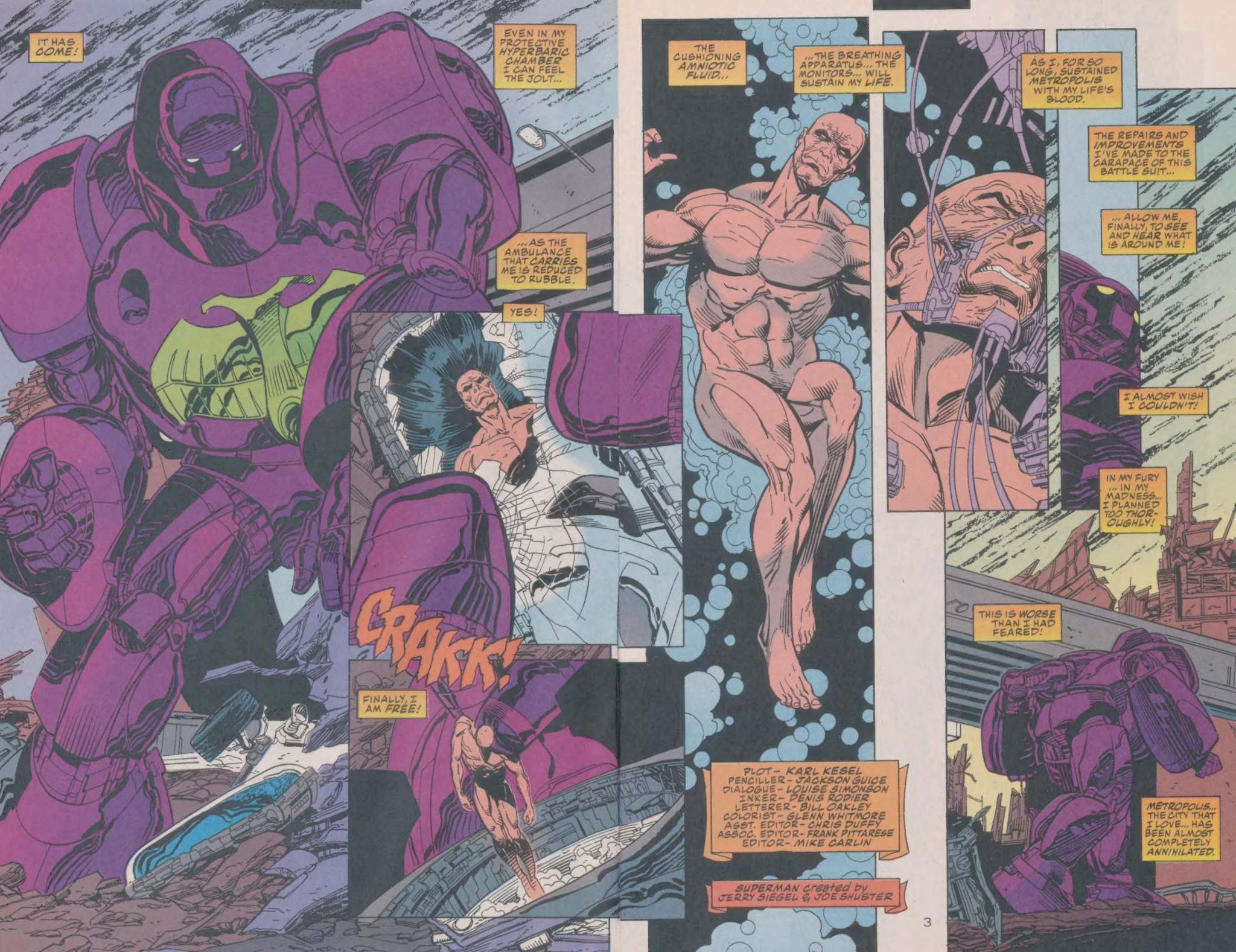
IT HAS COME!
EVEN IN MY PROTECTIVE HYPERBARIC CHAMBER I CAN FEEL THE JOLT...
...AS THE AMBULANCE THAT CARRIES ME IS REDUCED TO RUBBLE.
YES!
CRAKK!
FINALLY, I AM FREE!
THE CUSHIONING AMNIOTIC FLUID...
...THE BREATHING APPARATUS... THE MONITORS... WILL SUSTAIN MY LIFE.
AS I, FOR SO LONG, SUSTAINED METROPOLIS WITH MY LIFE'S BLOOD.
THE REPAIRS AND IMPROVEMENTS I'VE MADE TO THE CARAPACE OF THIS BATTLE SUIT...
...ALLOW ME, FINALLY, TO SEE AND HEAR WHAT IS AROUND ME!
I ALMOST WISH I COULDN'T!
IN MY FURY ... IN MY MADNESS... I PLANNED TOO THOROUGHLY!
THIS IS WORSE THAN I HAD FEARED!
METROPOLIS... THE CITY THAT I LOVE... HAS BEEN ALMOST COMPLETELY ANNIHILATED.
PLOT- KARL KESEL
PENCILLER- JACKSON GUICE
DIALOGUE- LOUISE SIMONSON
INKER- DENIS RODIER
LETTERER- BILL OAKLEY
COLORIST- GLENN WHITMORE
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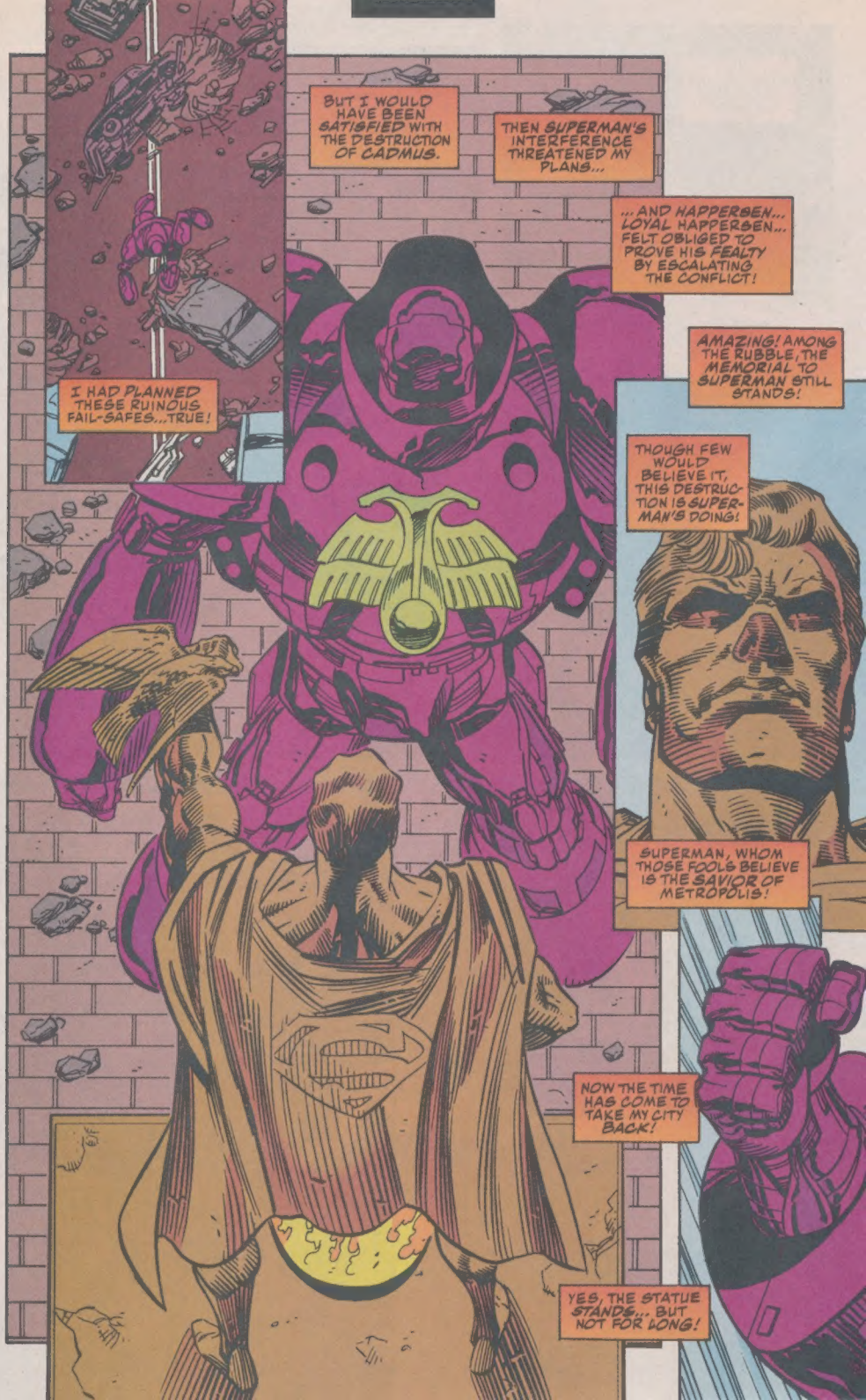
SUPERMAN created by JERRY SIEGEL & JOE SHUSTER


I HAD PLANNED THESE RUINOUS FAIL-SAFES...TRUE!
BUT I WOULD HAVE BEEN SATISFIED WITH THE DESTRUCTION OF CADMUS.
THEN SUPERMAN'S INTERFERENCE THREATENED MY PLANS...
...AND HAPPERSEN... LOYAL HAPPERSEN... FELT OBLIGED TO PROVE HIS FEALTY BY ESCALATING THE CONFLICT!
AMAZING! AMONG THE RUBBLE, THE MEMORIAL TO SUPERMAN STILL STANDS!
THOUGH FEW WOULD BELIEVE IT, THIS DESTRUCTION IS SUPERMAN'S DOING!
SUPERMAN, WHOM THOSE FOOLS BELIEVE IS THE SAVIOR OF METROPOLIS!
NOW THE TIME HAS COME TO TAKE MY CITY BACK!
YES, THE STATUE STANDS... BUT NOT FOR LONG!

THE
MINNESOTA TWINS
HAVE A
NEW OWNER

LITTLE BIG LEAGUE

CASTLE ROCK ENTERTAINMENT PRESENTS A LOBELL/BERGMAN PRODUCTION AN ANDREW SCHEINMAN FILM "LITTLE BIG LEAGUE" LUKE EDWARDS TIMOTHY BUSFIELD JOHN ASHTON ASHLEY CROW KEVIN DUNN AND JASON ROBARDS MUSIC BY STANLEY CLARKE FILM EDITOR MICHAEL JABLOW, A.C.E. PRODUCTION DESIGNER JEFFREY HOWARD DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY DONALD E. THORIN, A.S.C. EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS STEVE NICOLAIDES AND ANDREW BERGMAN STORY BY GREGORY K. PINCUS SCREENPLAY BY GREGORY K. PINCUS AND ADAM SCHEINMAN PRODUCED BY MIKE LOBELL DIRECTED BY ANDREW SCHEINMAN

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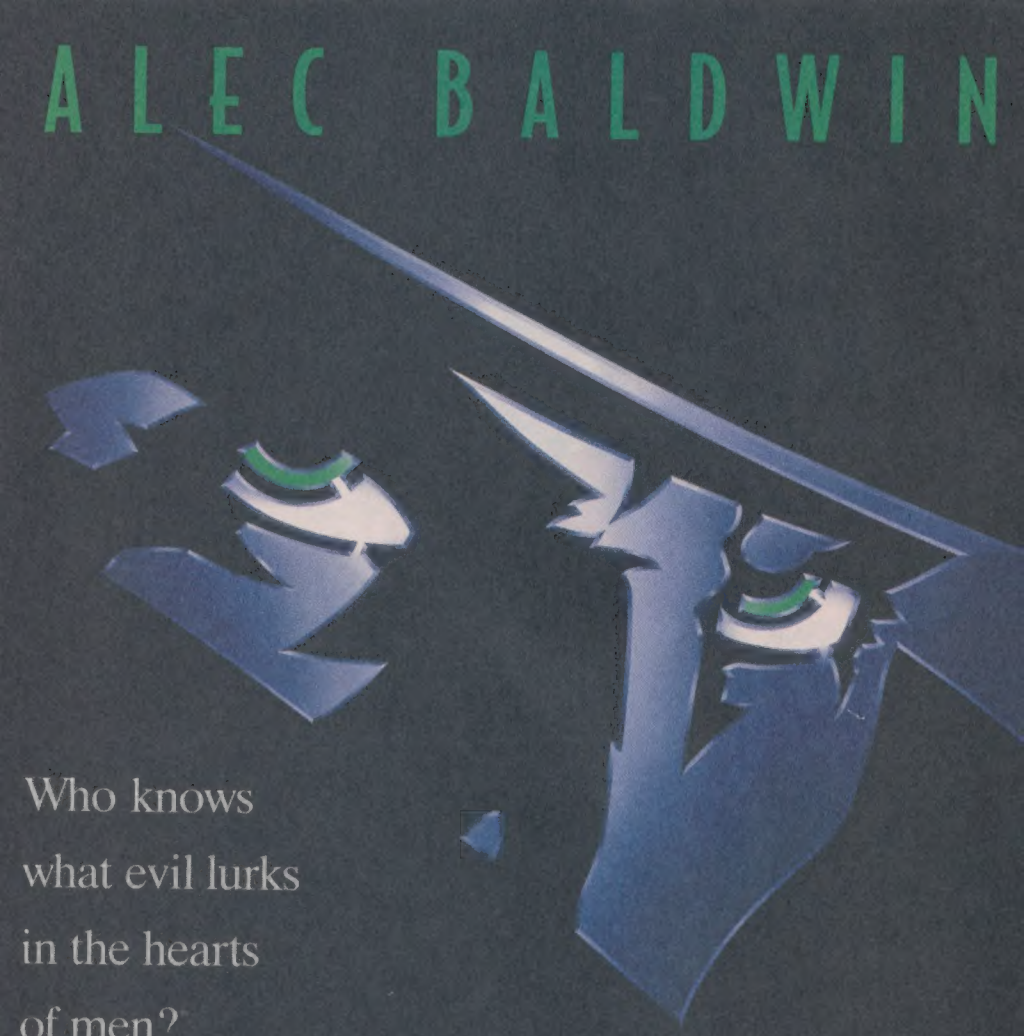
ALEC BALDWIN



Who knows
what evil lurks
in the hearts
of men?

The Shadow

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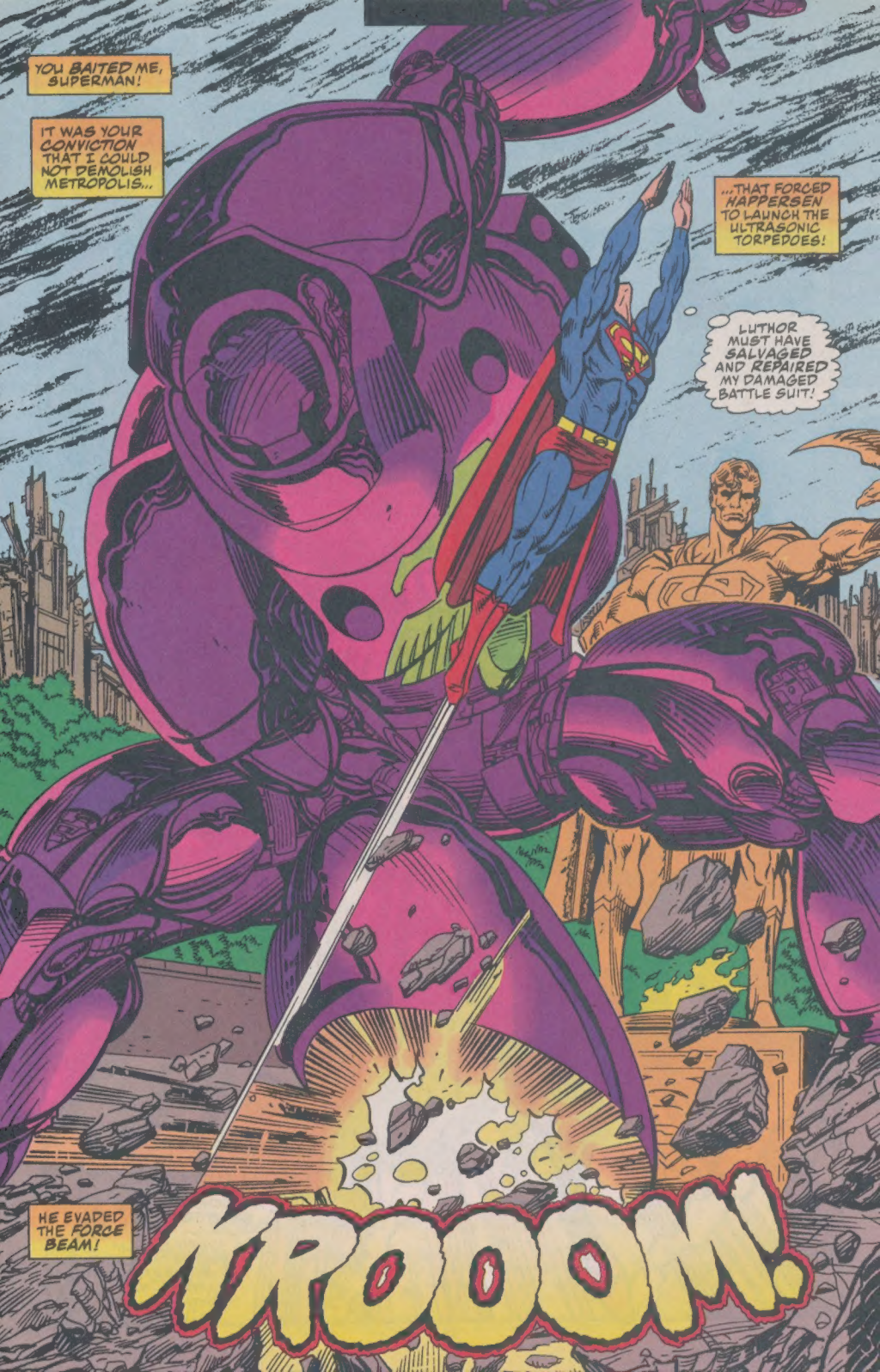
GREAT SCOTT! I HEARD THE AMBULANCE'S MAYDAY!
KNEW WHATEVER WAS HAPPENING HAD TO BE LUTHOR'S DOING!
BUT I NEVER EXPECTED HE'D USE MY OWN KRYPTONIAN BATTLE SUIT TO FURTHER METROPOLIS'S DESTRUCTION!
KTANG!
SUPERMAN! I SHOULD HAVE KNOWN HE'D COME!
NOW I WON'T NEED TO VENT MY FURY ON A MERE SYMBOL...

...WHEN I CAN DESTROY THE REAL THING ITSELF!
KRAKK!
USED THE BATTLE SUIT TO RETURN FROM MY FORTRESS TO METROPOLIS AFTER MY DEATH AND RETURN.
SO EAGER TO RUSH TO THE AID OF COAST CITY... NEVER GAVE IT A SECOND'S THOUGHT!
LEFT IT THERE ON THE RUNWAY!
OOF!
STUPID!


YOU BAITED ME, SUPERMAN!
IT WAS YOUR CONVICTION THAT I COULD NOT DEMOLISH METROPOLIS...
...THAT FORCED HAPPERSEN TO LAUNCH THE ULTRASONIC TORPEDOES!
LUTHOR MUST HAVE SALVAGED AND REPAIRED MY DAMAGED BATTLE SUIT!
HE EVADED THE FORCE BEAM!
KROOOM!

LET HIM TRY TO EVADE THESE!
MISSILES!
THE DOCTORS SAID HE WAS TOTALLY PARALYZED... A VEGETABLE!
THAT MAY BE TRUE, BUT, PARALYZED AS HE IS...
BA-DOOM!
...MAD AS HE IS...
...HE'S FOUND A WAY TO ACTIVATE MY BATTLE SUIT AND COMMAND IT TO OBLITERATE ME!
UNF!! CAUGHT TWO OF THE BOMBS! POWERFUL WEAPONS!

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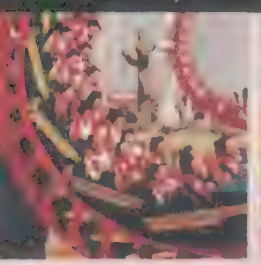

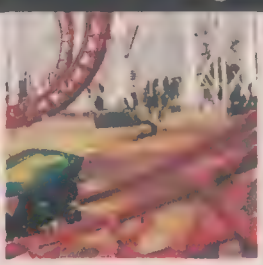

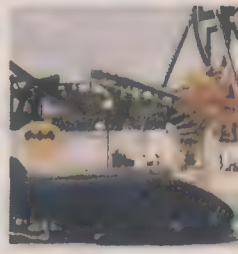

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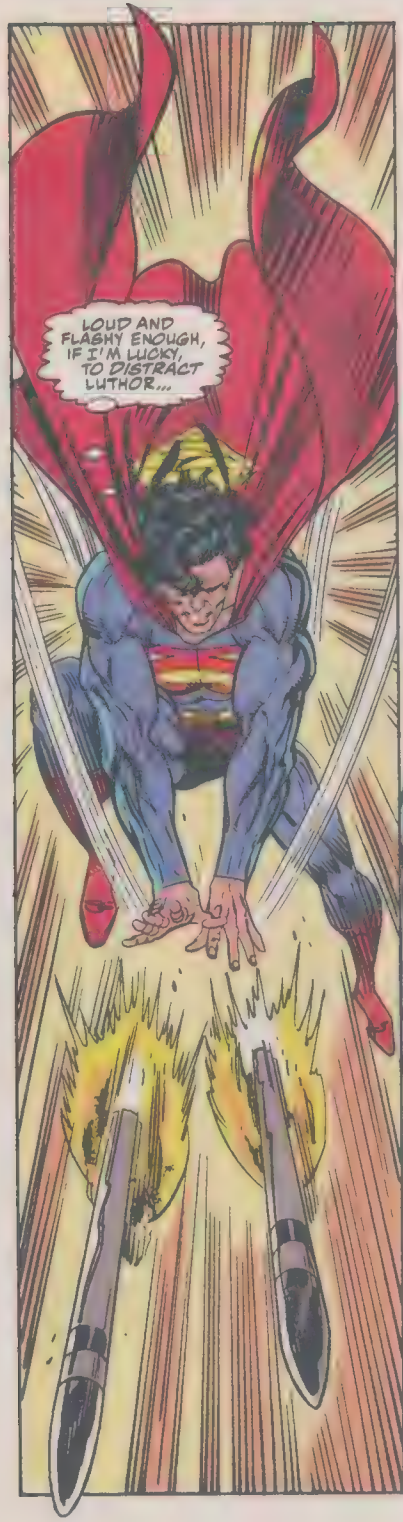
LOUD AND FLASHY ENOUGH, IF I'M LUCKY, TO DISTRACT LUTHOR...

...AND ALLOW ME TO GET CLOSE ENOUGH TO RIP HIM FROM THE HEART OF THAT ARMOR!
WHEN I DEACTIVATED YOUR OTHER FAIL-SAFE DEVICES, LUTHOR...
...I SHOULD HAVE GUESSED YOU'D TRY TO USE MY KRYPTONIAN TECHNOLOGY TO DEVASTATE THIS CITY!

NOT THE CITY, SUPERMAN!
CRAZSH!!
KOOM!!
:OOPH!: LUTHOR EVADED THE MISSILES...
...CLUBBED ME WITH MY OWN STATUE!
THE DESTRUCTIVE FAIL-SAFES--AFTERBURN, THE TRIPODS, THE MIND-FOG--WERE DEFENSIVE DEVICES
...ORIGINALLY INSTALLED TO PROTECT THE CITY IN THE EVENT OF ANOTHER ALIEN INVASION!
THEY ACTIVATED AUTOMATICALLY WHEN THE ULTRASONIC TORPEDOES WERE DEPLOYED!
YOUR GAMBLE PAID OFF--I COULD NOT RAZE METROPOLIS!
BUT I WILL DO ANYTHING IN MY POWER TO DESTROY YOU!
I DON'T THINK YOU NEED TO HEAR ME SPEAK TO UNDERSTAND THAT!
BA-DOOM!
BA-ROOM!

NOW, MAN OF STEEL, YOU ARE ON YOUR KNEES--
--AND YOU ARE MINE!

I WILL CRUSH YOU INTO OBLIVION!
TOWERING OVER ME! FOOT RAISED--

--JUST ONE THING TO DO!
MAKE MYSELF INTO A MISSILE...
...AND LAUNCH MYSELF AT SUPER-SPEED--
KRAKZK!
MY LEG!
THOOM!

--AND WATCH LUTHOR TOPPLE TO THE GROUND!
HE SHATTERED THE LEG OF THE WAR-SUIT!
A CLEVER PLOY, SUPERMAN, BUT IT WON'T STOP ME!

A GOUT OF IGNITED ROCKET FUEL--TWO THOUSANDS OF DEGREES FAHRENHEIT SHOULD DO THE TRICK!
FWOOOSH!
YEOWW!
I CAN FEEL IT! ACTUALLY FEEL--!

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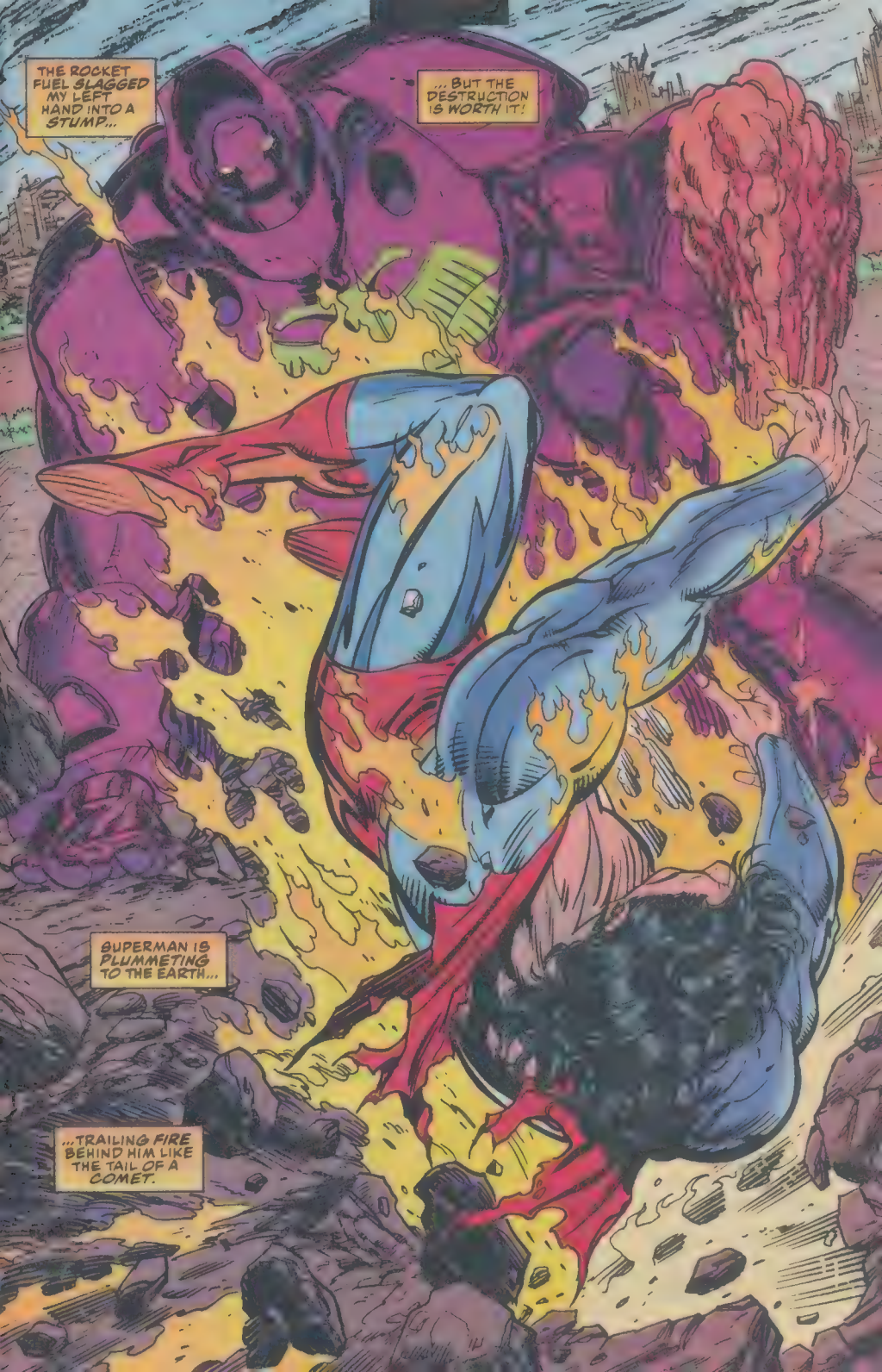
THE ROCKET FUEL SLAGGED MY LEFT HAND INTO A STUMP...
...BUT THE DESTRUCTION IS WORTH IT!
SUPERMAN IS PLUMMETING TO THE EARTH...
...TRAILING FIRE BEHIND HIM LIKE THE TAIL OF A COMET.

SO NOW YOU KNOW WHAT IT FEELS LIKE, SUPERMAN...
...TO BE GOING... GOING... GONE!
WITHOUT THIS SHELL OF A BATTLE SUIT, I AM NOTHING BUT A LIVING CORPSE.
AND NOW I HAVE TAKEN YOU WITH ME!
NO!

IT'S NOT POSSIBLE!
HE HAS SURVIVED WHAT EVEN HIS KRYPTONIAN BATTLE SUIT COULD NOT!
NICE TRY, LUTHOR...

...BUT NO CIGAR!
KRNCH!
WAHM!
ONE INSTANT HE WAS CROUCHING THERE, SCORCHED AND FURIOUS...
...THE NEXT, HE'S RIPPING MY BATTLE SUIT APART!

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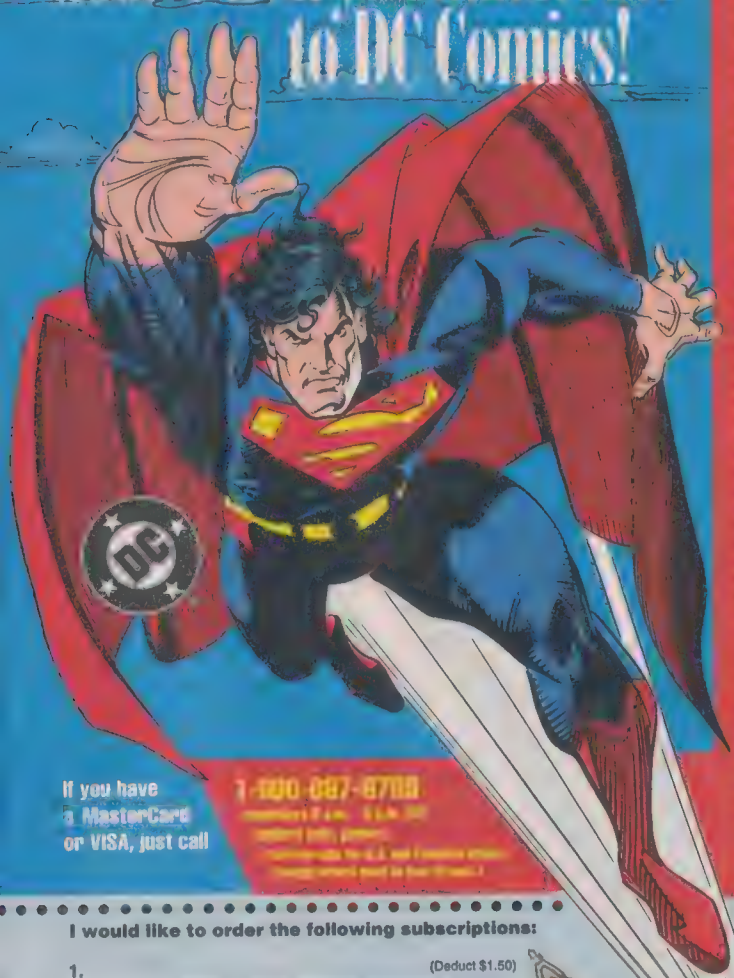

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HE HAS ME!
THE CITY IS RUBBLE AROUND US.
AND I HAVE FAILED TO DESTROY HIM!

S.T.A.R. LABS. HE'S TAKEN ME HERE...
...WHERE THE SERUM WAS SYNTHESIZED THAT SHOULD HAVE CURED ME!
HOW IS HE, DR. FAULKNER?
LUTHOR WAS MUCH FARTHER GONE THAN THE OTHER CLONES!
THE SERUM STOPPED HIS DETERIORATION...

...BUT IT DIDN'T REVERSE THE DAMAGE AS IT DID WITH SUPERBOY AND SOME OF THE OTHERS.
WE'RE NOT SURE WHY.
WE SURMISE THAT HIS CLONED BODY WAS GROWN MORE QUICKLY THAN THOSE OF THE CADMUS CLONES...
...EXCEPT PERHAPS FOR THE UNDERWORLDERS, ALL OF WHOM SEEM TO HAVE PERISHED.
IT'S HARD TO BELIEVE THAT LEX LUTHOR IS ALL BUT GONE!
THIS IS TRULY THE END OF AN ERA!
THAT'S RIGHT, SUPERMAN. REVEL IN YOUR SENSE OF FALSE SECURITY.
IT IS YOUR FAULT METROPOLIS WAS DESTROYED!
IT IS YOUR FAULT I RECEIVED THE SERUM TOO LATE!
IT IS YOUR FAULT I'M LYING HERE, UNABLE EVEN TO CLOSE MY OWN EYES!
IT IS YOUR FAULT! AND I SWEAR THAT SOME DAY,.. SOMEHOW... I'LL MAKE YOU PAY!
Dedicated to ROGER STERN-- It's only fitting that LEX LUTHOR leaves with him. Here's hoping they both RETURN... when we least EXPECT it!

RE:ACTION

DC COMICS
1325 Avenue of the Americas, New York, NY 10019

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Dear DC:

ACTION #697 was one of those rare Stern extra-action-packed adventures. Not that Roger doesn't always write action-packed tales, of course, but once a year, he writes an issue that feels like it's twice as long and twice as exciting. This was nonstop adventure.

First, watch Lex cringe at the hands of a furious Superman. Then see round one of the Supes-Bizarro fight. Next, a visit to Smallville with Lana and Bizarro, and then round two. All this in one issue! Plus an introspective and unnerved Superman, a dying and hairless Luthor, a poor, confused Bizarro, and a thoughtful Lana. And to think, most writers could be satisfied to limit clashes of titans to one a story. All in all, a very strong story, both as part of the five-parter and on its own.

Jackson and Denis's art was superb, as usual. The Midway City sequence was especially well done.

On to other business. Clark and Lois have been engaged for over THREE years! Even taking into account comic book time, which seems to be about six to nine months, it's been a long time not to set a wedding date—beyond which, I'd think Clark would be anxious to set the date after his brush with death. But there's nothing in the works. It's getting pretty drawn out.

Okay, ACTION #700 is reserved for "Doomsday II." That leaves MOS #50 or SUPERMAN #100 as good dates. I want to see the wedding already, unless you have someone back out fairly soon, which is just as acceptable. Just don't make the Super-couple into a modern day Jack Benny and Mary Livingston, forever being sweethearts well into their 50s on the old TV show.

Lastly, I also read and enjoyed SUPERMAN: UNDER A YELLOW SUN. Clark's "novel" wasn't exactly a masterpiece, but the actual story was a very good tale of our favorite hero. But how about giving Lois equal time? She's an Edgar-winning novelist, and everyone loves a mystery. See you in seven.

Simon DelMonte
Queens, NY

We hope you don't think we fell for your little ruse, Simon—buttering us up with a smattering of compliments and then nagging us for wedding dates. You won't get any information out of us! No sirree! But, hang on—that last paragraph..."A Novel by Lois Lane"...hmmm. Now, there's a notion...For throwing some grist in our collective mill, we promise to send you a wedding invite...whenever that time may come! (And we will, too, if we get your address!)

*****

Dear DC:

I've only been collecting for a year now, so I'm a relatively new reader, but I've noticed a change in Superman. It seems that he's getting a bit of an aggressive attitude. Evidence of that is: Superman growing angry when he could not find Lois in ADVENTURES OF SUPERMAN #510, when he told Lois that he must try to do everything (in MAN OF STEEL #28), and more recently, the way he treated Bizarro.

I don't think that Superman should've treated Bizarro so roughly. Bizarro is just a confused living thing. If Superman approached Bizarro more gently, then Bizarro might not have reacted that violently. Superman's aggression may stem from his increasing powers. His hair is somewhat a symbol of the incredible power, so when you get rid of Superman's increasing power in the weeks ahead, get rid of the hair for that reason

ACTION COMICS #697

(and that the long hair just does not look good). If you don't cut the hair that way, then how about it gets pulled out during SUPERMAN/DOOMSDAY: HUNTER/PREY miniseries in April? No matter how you do it, please lose the hair.

I'm sorry about this negative letter (you guys really do a good job), but I have one more complaint. Too many shadows are used on Superman's face, which makes him look very grim. Until Superman changes his name to Punisher, make mine Definitely Cool.

Jack Grimes II
Oxford, NJ

*****

Dear Mike, Frank, and Chris:

Whatever happened to Superman's legendary compassion? Never in the past has he outright attacked somebody who was as obviously confused as Bizarro is. Sure Bizarro was taking Clark's friends, but they were never in any danger. Bizarro is just a not-so-fragile, confused lost soul in a world he doesn't understand, so Superman attacks him after almost ripping Lex Luthor's bald (!) head off.

With his increased power, I would have thought that Clark would take things as slowly and as cautiously as possible; instead he flies off the handle and almost kills Luthor. Not very "super."

Don Cromie
Cleveland, OH

So you think the Man of Steel was a wee bit too hasty, do you, Don and Jack? Well, you're entitled to your opinion. But we just hope you don't wake up one day to find a super-strong addlebrained clone of yourself harassing all your loved ones. Okay, so it's unlikely, but think of the stress it'd cause! Seriously, Supes found himself with the strength to head off a potential deadly force before it got out of control. His motivation in meeting the threat with brutal force? Think "Doomsday."

*****

Dear Chris:

Whoa! Talk about being caught in the shower...Superman sure was mad in the opening panels of ACTION #697. I realize the big guy has been under a little bit of a strain recently, with his powers mysteriously increasing and this Bizarro incident, but he was kinda overreacting when he burst in on Luthor like that. Not being able to save Lois last issue must have really gotten to our hero. He'd better show a little more control in the future or somebody might file a lawsuit claiming damages.

Also, it was nice to see Lana and Pete again, but I'm surprised that Lana needed more encouragement to marry Pete. I thought you guys had finished the Pete/Lana/Clark triangle in ACTION #679, so I guess I'm a little disappointed you had to rehash a decision that had already been made. I hope you'll move forward now with their wedding.

I've also heard that Roger Stern is going to be leaving ACTION COMICS with issue #700. It was a treat to meet him at a signing at a local shop last fall. I'll miss him, as he always seemed to have an excellent grip on most of the characters, especially Lex Luthor II and Supergirl. I'm eager to learn of his replacement, but I hope he's as skilled a storyteller as Roger is...

James Evans
Ithaca, NY

Sadly, you heard right about Roger Stern's leave of absence from the Superbooks (note the phrasing, please), but you apparently didn't hear the good news. Replacing Roger as writer of ACTION COMICS (as of issue #702) is none other than David Michelinie—a comics scribe known for ground-breaking storytelling in the pages of STAR-HUNTERS, Iron Man, Avengers, Spider-

Man, *and recently of JUSTICE LEAGUE TASK FORCE, among countless other titles. When David came on board the good ship Metropolis, we around the DC offices started rattling off recollections of memorable Michelinie stories, and there seemed to be no end to the list. ACTION is in capable hands. Now on to weightier matters...*

*****

To Lex Luthor:

My heart bleeds for you, Fred Mertz.

Charles D. Brown
Brentwood, NY

Remember that episode where Fred and Ricky hide in the Kryptonian battle suit so they can spy on Lucy and Ethel? And then the suit goes wild, levelling the building and causing chaos until little Ricky pulls the plug? That was a good one, huh, Charles?

*****

Dear Mike:

ACTION #697, page 18: "Look out—behind you!" "I see it, Lana!"

Wha—?

Clark has eyes in the back of his head now? (Come to think of it, that would explain all of that hair!)

Chris Coleman
Bolivar, TN

It may seem like you caught us in a goof, Chris, but remember, each comic book panel is not merely a snapshot of time, but rather a composite of several moments in one picture for dramatic effect. In other words, in the panel in question, Superman's action (turning his back on the flying debris) takes place a moment after he says that he sees the rocks. If you're still doubtful, then how about nice glass of Baldy to help that explanation go down more easily? Thanks for keeping us on our toes.

*****

Dear Chris:

I'll try to keep my comments short this time around. ACTION #697 nicely continued Bizarro's tale. First, I like the newly bald Luthor. His "new look" reminds me of the pre-Crisis 1980s-era look: skinny, bald and threatening. All he's missing is the green battlesuit. Seeing Lana Lang, though, was the best part of the issue. I'd love to see more of Smallville on a regular basis, as hard as that might be for you at Superman Central to do. Her encounter with the Bizarre One, too, brought back fun memories.

As for the artwork, Jackson and Denis did a good job, although the drawings seemed more detailed and angular, as if the artists were using a different style. Then again, Bizarro didn't actually look as robotic in Jackson and Denis's interpretation.

Before I go, I was reading a comment by somebody somewhere (I'm forgetful!) where the person felt your new Bizarro story was good but missing the fun and exuberance of the 1950s/1960s Bizarro World tales. True, the World may be no more, but the SUPERMAN line has always taken the best of the old and given it new life. I, for one, am pleased.

Joey Marchese
Union, NJ

So, you like Smallville, eh? Not a bad year for you then, Joey. Not only did you see Lana Lang's wedding in the last issue of ACTION, but in the coming months you'll see Superman's life complicated by an unexpected threat that hails from that very same little small Kansas town.

*****

Deer Actions:

Me am so PO'ed. Me look at BIZARRO #697 and see evil bad Superman kick butt of real Superman. What's up? This evil Superman be mean to my buddy and towel-head, Lex Luthorrrrr. He am good guy. I buy him cleanser with his secret identity on it: Mr. Clean. That what I call him now. I see Lex, I say, "Goodbye, Mr. Clean!"

Anyway, why you show me get beat up by bad Superman and Lah-nah? Nobody love me. Not even Lo-iz. I tempted to fly to sun to get away from bad story. I know it hot. Maybe it cool off by time I get there! HA!

I real Superman. This book suck. I not read anymore. I read Image com-iks. They good!

Stupidly,
Jerry Smith (oops, me spell name backwards!)
Notgnilrub, YK

Don't try this at home, kids! The writer is a trained Bizarro impersonator!

*****

Re: ACTION #697

Beautiful, most definitely beautiful. This third installment of the "Bizarro's World" was good. The excitement is building for Lex and the others. The first page set the tone for the entire issue. The clever use of shadows and the excellent coloring work by Glenn Whitmore makes for one marvelous issue. I can't wait for the "Battle for Metropolis" storyline. A few questions, which will no doubt be answered by the time I see this printed, but I feel I must ask.

First, is the Guardian going to fall? I hope not. He is by far my favorite supporting character. More action (get it?) with him and the Newsboys would be fabulous.

Second, could we possibly have a second "Day of the Krypton Man" storyline or maybe even a miniseries? The Eradicator was my favorite villain, and I'd hate to see him/it wiped out. You could keep the David Connor-Eradicator and still have the original if you had the psyche of the Eradicator return to its original form—energy.

Now that I've gotten that off my chest, how about I kiss up a little. My favorite title in the SUPERMAN line used to be MAN OF STEEL, but you guys won me over into accepting Guice, Rodier, and Whitmore's art. My favorite issue so far has to be the first installment of the Eradicator's take on Superman. I even removed the poster to place it on my wall.

As for Stern, we've got to keep this guy on the payroll. How about a raise for this man, who definitely deserves it! I picked up a copy of The Death and Life of Superman and it was most definitely superior! I missed a few things that we had in the comics, but not everything translates over so well, does it?

I look forward to the ACTION COMICS ANNUAL. I'm sure your Elseworlds story will be a goody, as long as Jackson Guice, Denis Rodier, and Roger Stern have a hand in it!

Okay, lemme see. I've asked intelligent questions, kissed up to the people who worked so hard to make this book what it is, and I've stated my hope for future issues of equal value. Hmm. Everything checks out. How about one of Lex's infamous Baldies (which are once again an appropriate name for the award)? See you next issue!

Rüs C. Smith
Matewan, WV

Well, our ACTION COMICS annual is not by Stern, Guice and Rodier. But there's a bright side—someone by the name of John Byrne is doing the story and art. Look for an Elseworlds tale of Superman during the time of the American Revolution next month by the man who—ahem—revolutionized the Man of Steel eight years ago! It's the last of the 1994 Superman Elseworld annuals—stories that brought the Last Son of Krypton to settings and conflicts you thought you'd never see.

We also hope you'll catch this month's ADVENTURES OF SUPERMAN annual (that's next week) which shows us a conquered Earth whose defeated heroes—including Superman—rise to oppose alien oppressors. It's written by Karl Kesel, pencilled by new talent Brok L. Hor, and inked by equally new and talented Curt Shoultz (from this year's MAN OF STEEL ANNUAL and now the HAWKMAN monthly). Read it! Then come right back to the DC Universe and we'll bring you back down to earth.

—Chris Duffy
Who else?

NEXT WEEK: In MAN OF STEEL #36 (continued from the logo-shattering WORLDS COLLIDE #1—from Milestone), Superman and Icon, a hero from another Earth, join forces to challenge the powerful creature called Rift, who is forcing the heroes' cities together, endangering an already shaken Metropolis. It's by Weezie, Bog, and Jank, and it looks so good!

IN TWO WEEKS: In SUPERMAN #92, Massacre returns to Earth hellbent on bringing down the Man of Steel—as if Metropolis didn't have enough problems! And remember that little skimmer guy from Massacre's first appearance in ADVENTURES #509? He's back, too. And so are Jurgens and Rubinstein, who bring you flying rubble and many punches in fourteen days.

IN THREE WEEKS: In ADVENTURES OF SUPERMAN #515, Superman learns the secret to taking out Massacre, but is it too late? Is it? And Professor Hamilton meets a group of young women who will rock his world! Karl Kesel, Barry Kitson, and Ray McCarthy rock yours in twenty one days!

IN FOUR WEEKS: In ACTION COMICS #702, from the ruins of Metropolis, one man steps forward with a sick dream to keep the city racially "pure" when it's repopulated! You guessed it—Bloodsport is back! In David Michelinie's first issue as new writer, Superman battles Metropolis's most twisted villain in a story drawn by old faithfuls Jackson Guice and Denis Rodier. See you in twenty-eight.

Luthor sports a dapper new suit on this month's ACTION cover, as pencilled by Jackson Guice, inked by Denis Rodier, and colored by Suzanne Bourdages—fashion plates all!

To find out the answer, fold this page so that the tips of the arrows touch each other.

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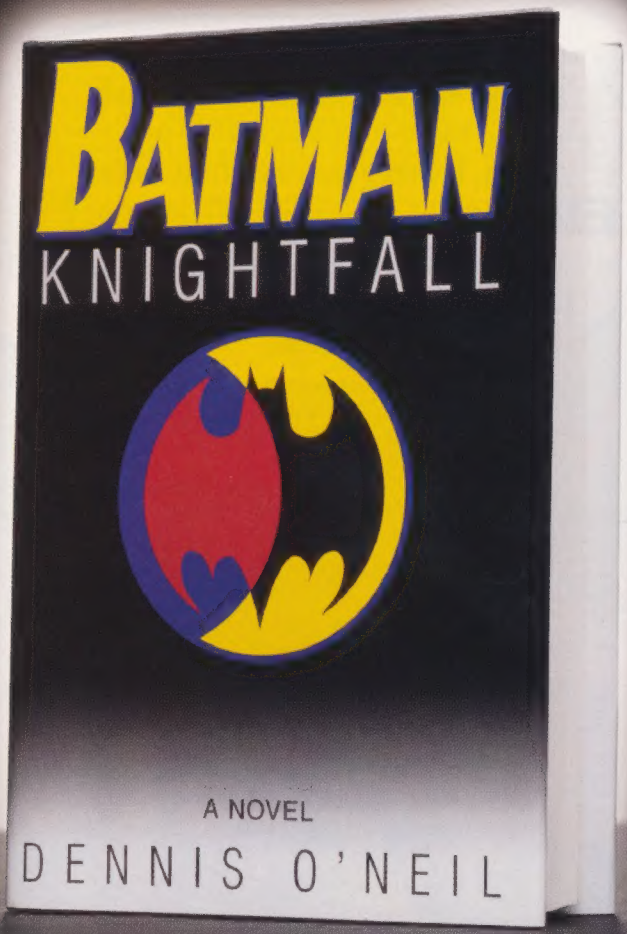

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